Approved For Release 2008/02/25 : CIA-RDP79T00429A001200050031-8

CONFIDENTIAL

OCI No. 2477/63

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
29 November 1963

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Castro's Speech of 27 November on the President's Assassination

1. Textual analysis of Fidel Castro's 27 November speech at Havana University neither proves nor disproves that the Cuban leader had advance knowledge of the assassination of President Kennedy. It does indicate that Castro--alert to the consequences which even the imputation of complicity would have for US-Cuban relations--is fully read-in on the details of the shooting as they have been reported by the press.

2. The speech reveals Castro as determined to "prove" that the late President Kennedy died at the instigation, if not by the hand, of "ultrareactionaries" in the United States. As in his speech on 24 November, Castro's latest remarks reflect considerable apprehension that as a consequence of the assassination, the US might adopt an even tougher line toward Cuba. This, he alleges, was what motivated those who were behind the attack on the President.

3. The thrust of Castro's remarks is that Oswald was the innocent dupe in a complex plot--a plot Castro attempts to unravel for his listeners. To this end, he presents a considerable body of "evidence." He concludes from the shooting of Oswald in the Dallas police headquarters, for example, that local authorities conspired with those who had originally employed the assassin to bring about his death.

4. Castro rehearses the details of Oswald's 27 September application for a Cuban visa at the Cuban consulate in Mexico City and reports publicly for the first time the arrest of two employees of the consulate by Mexican police on 23 November. This was done, he charges, in order to fabricate a case against Cuba, and to provide a pretext for punitive action against the revolution. Oswald's Dallas television interview in

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July, his attempts to infiltrate the pro-Castro Fair Play for Cuba Committee, and his street brawl with anti-Castro refugees--all were intended by those behind Oswald to mislead public opinion.

5. For Castro's purpose, the decision of the Dallas police to "close" the Oswald case with the shooting of Sunday, 24 November..."demonstrates that the persons guilty of the death of Kennedy needed and urgently had to eliminate the accused at any cost...so that he would not talk..."

6. But, says the Cuban Premier, the "shot has backfired." Alluding to statements made early this week by doctors at the Parkland Hospital, Castro claims that no one in a position to do so has said whether there were one or two bullets used to kill the President. Castro declared that "they cannot establish which are the entry and exit wounds," implying that more than one assassin was involved, and that the President was struck both from in front and behind.

7. In sum, while Castro obviously was well briefed and went to some lengths to select "evidence" to indict unnamed reactionaries in the United States, (conversely clearing himself of any involvement), nothing he said indicates advance knowledge of the assassination or encompasses more factual data than can be presumed to have been gleaned from the press.

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